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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 HA-05 /066 W
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R 021416Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6877
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
USCINCSO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, ES
SUBJECT: MARCH 12 ELECTIONS FOR DEPUTIES AND MAYORS WILL BE
VIRTUALLY UNCONTESTED

1. GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PARTIDO DEMOCRATA CRISTIANO (PDC), LARGEST OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTY IN EL SALVADOR, AT MEETING JANUARY 29 VOTED OVERWHELMINGLY NOT TO FILED CANDIDATES FOR MARCH 12 ELECTIONS FOR 54 SEATS IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND 261 MAYORSHIPS. PRIMARY REASONS FOR NON-PDC PARTICIPATION WERE CITED AS "LACK OF GUARANTEES AND THE ACTUAL SITUATION IN EL SALVADOR". PDC LEADERSHIP ADDED THAT THEIR DECISION NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN MARCH ELECTIONS DID NOT MEAN THEIR PARTY WAS RETIRING TO A "COMFORTABLE OPPOSITION". THEY STATED THAT PDC WOULD CONTINUE ITS STRUGGLE IN FAVOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS, ESPECIALLY NOW WHEN THE GOES IS ATTEMPTING TO COVER IS REPRESSION UNDER A LEGAL FACADE SUCH AS THE REFORMED PENAL CODE AND THE LAW OF DEFENSE AND GUARANTEE OF PUBLIC ORDER.
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2. MOVIMIENTO NACIONAL REVOLUCIONARIO (MNR), SECOND LARGEST OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTY, PLACED FULL-PAGE STATEMENT IN ALL MAJOR NEWSPAPERS ON JANUARY 27 PROCLAIMING THEIR FINAL DECISION NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN MARCH ELECTIONS. MNR STATEMENT WENT INTO GREAT DETAIL ON PREVIOUS FRAUDULENT ELECTIONS, REPRESSIVE ACTS OF ROMERO ADMINISTRATION AND LACK

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OF CONFIDENCE OF SALVADORAN PEOPLE IN ELECTORAL PROCESS. STATE-
MENT ENDED WITH EXTENSIVE LIST OF THINGS THAT PRESIDENT SHOULD
DO "IF HE LISTENED TO THE DEMANDS OF THE PEOPLE". AMONG THEM
WERE FREEING OF PRISONERS OF "DISAPPEARED" POLITICAL PERSONS OR
AT LEAST PUTTING THEM BEFORE JUDICIAL TRIBUNALS; PERMITTING THE
RETURN OF ALL EXILES; ARRIVING AT AN ACCORD WITH CATHOLIC CHURCH
OVER RETURN OF PRIESTS: CLEARING UP (DEPURAR) THE SECURITY FORCES;
ASSURING THE IMPARTIALITY OF THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF ELECTIONS
AND REFORMING THE ELECTIONS LAW.

3. SINCE THE THIRD AND SMALLEST MEMBER OF THE UNO COALITION,
THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED UDN, HAD PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED THAT
IT WOULD NOT TAKE PART IN THE MARCH ELECTIONS, THERE REMAINS
NO EFFECTIVE POLITICAL OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT PARTY, THE
PCN.

4. ONE VERY SMALL POLITICAL GROUPING, THE PARTIDO POPULAR
SALVADORENO (PPS), WHICH IS CONSERVATIVE AND PRO-GOES, HAS
BEEN ISSUING PUBLIC STATEMENTS, GIVEN RATHER EXTENSIVE PRESS
COVERAGE, THAT THEY INTEND TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTIONS.
SINCE THE PPS DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTIONS OF 1976 AND
1977, AND CAPTURED LESS THAN 1 PERCENT OF VOTE IN 1974, THERE IS
SOME QUESTION AS THEIR ELEIGIBILITY, BUT THE CENTRAL ELECTORAL
COUNCIL HAS INDICATED THEY MEET THE CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIRE-
MENTS.

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5. COMMENT. WHETHER OR NOT THE PPS PARTICIPATES, THE MARCH
ELECTIONS ARE NOW SUPERFLUOS, WITH THE PCN ASSURED OF WINNING
ALL 54 SEATS IN THE ASSEMBLY AND THE 261 MAYORSHIPS (UNLESS THEY
DECIDED TO GIVE THE PPS A FEW TOKEN POSITIONS IN RETURN FOR THEIR
PARTICIPATION.)

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
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Disposition History: n/a
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